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THE LIBRARY SCHOOL AN EXPERIENCE IN CO-OPERATION

Mary P. Parsons

THE LIBRARY SCHOOL is nearing the end of its first year and twenty-nine students will be completing the professional course on November 29.

Out of the same critical shortage of librarians which made the school a necessity, arose almost insuperable difficulties which could not have been surmounted without the co-operation of the library profession and of many other people.

The co-operation of the United States Government in lending the Director of the United States Information Library for part time to act as Director of the School and of the New Zealand Government in seconding help to the

United States Information Library have already been reported in NEW ZEALAND LIBRARIES.

The decision of the New Zealand Library Association to give first priority to the needs of the Library School in 1946 was not just a conference resolution to be adopted and forgotten. It was a code of action.

Students of library science need experienced teachers who understand library administration, who know books and who know how to teach. Lectures about books would soon be forgotten unless the students could examine, compare and review the books and use them in compiling bibliographies and answering reference questions. Therefore librarians implemented the conference resolution by lending books generously as well as by coming to lecture at the School. University professors and lecturers, teachers and civil servants also accepted invitations to lecture at the School, each making an authoritative contribution on the bibliography of his special field. Libraries, Government departments and private institutions arranged visits for the students so that they could see printing and binding in operation, a newspaper being edited and printed and libraries in action.

Since the professional course is only 39 weeks in length and students should not work more than a maximum of 45 hours a week, it has taken very careful planning to co-ordinate all these different contributions to the course in such a way that essentials may be covered and no time be lost in overlapping or repetition unless it is planned repetition for the purpose of emphasis or review. Book lists are mimeographed in advance and given to the students so that class hours may be spent in lectures, reports and discussions with no time lost in dictating titles.

The Book Course and the course in Library Administration were outlined and co-ordinated by the Director of the School who gave some parts of each course. The major portions, however, were done from a New Zealand viewpoint by New Zealand librarians and subject specialists.

In the Book Course, the part time lecturers were Mr G. T. Alley, Director of the National Library Service, Mr Eric McCormick, Chief War Archivist, and Mr John Harris, Librarian of Otago University Library. Dr Scholefield, Chief Librarian of the General Assembly Library gave several lectures on government publications of Great Britain, and one about the making of a biographical dictionary. Mr Harold Miller, Librarian of Victoria University College, gave four lectures on history and books of history. Subject specialists from Victoria University College who lectured

at the school were Professor Von Zedlitz, Professor Emeritus, on translations, Professor Gordon on the structure of the novel, Dr Campbell on books of mathematics and of statistics, Mr McKenzie on geography and maps. Mr Rossiter, Chief Draughtsman of the Lands and Survey Department, showed the students how maps are printed. Mr J. D. McDonald, of Westport Technical High School, gave a series of lectures on books of physics and chemistry. Mr Laughlin, Agricultural Attache at the American Legation, spoke about publications of the United States Department of Agriculture. Mr. Scott of Wellington Teachers' Training College and Mr Smith of the Education Department stimulated discussion by presenting opposing views on detective fiction.

In November Mr Taylor, Librarian of the Alexander Turnbull Library and Dr J. C. Beaglehole of Victoria University College and the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, will lecture on the history of books and printing.

Intensive study of New Zealand reference works throughout the course has been based upon the forthcoming *Guide to New Zealand reference material* compiled by Mr John Harris.

The major portions of the course in Library Administration have been given by the Director of the National Library Service and the Director of the Library School. Mr Norrie, formerly Chief Librarian of the Wellington Public Libraries, and Mr Bramley, Superintendent of the Bindery, arranged for every student to have practical experience in mending and binding books. Mr Perry, now Chief Librarian, gave a lecture at the School on local body administration. Mr Somerset, Director of the Community Centre for Further Education, Feilding, gave two lectures on community relationships.

In the second semester Mr Dunningham, Librarian of the Dunedin Public Library, gave four lectures on public libraries, and Mr Clifford Collins, Librarian of Canterbury University College gave a series of lectures with practical problems on library buildings and equipment. Mr Collins also spoke about the reorganisation of Canterbury University College Library and about the Library of Congress classification. Dr Beeby, Director of Education, gave a talk on school buildings and school libraries. Mr Bagnall, Librarian of the National Library Centre spoke about the libraries of government departments. Miss Davis, Assistant Director of the United States Information Library, spoke

about information in files and also about readers' advisory service in public libraries.

University library administration was presented in a series of lectures by Mr John Harris, Librarian of Otago University Library.

In November Miss Mary Fleming will speak about library work with young adults, and Miss Jean Norrie will lecture on hospital libraries.

The course in Classification and Cataloguing was planned by Miss Alice Minchin, formerly Librarian of Auckland University College, who generously gave up her personal plans for the year in order to carry this course until Miss Mary Fleming could return from Columbia University to take over the course on October 1.

Miss Kathleen Harvey, seconded for part time by the National Library Service, planned and gave the work on Children's and School Libraries with particular emphasis on the study of Children's Books. She based this part of her course to a large extent upon Mrs Dorothy Neal White's forthcoming book on children's literature.

Since many graduates of the Library School are likely to be working at first without the assistance of children's librarians, it was thought best for every student to have basic training in this field.

In the second semester, however, students divided themselves into two seminar groups, one group doing further work on children's and school libraries and the other group studying special libraries such as those of Government departments, of industry, banks, newspapers, art museums and other organisations needing fully developed library service in some special field. Miss Jean Norrie, who was sent on a New Zealand Red Cross Fellowship to study Hospital Librarianship at the University of Minnesota has returned in time to give some lectures in this interesting and highly specialised field.

Preparation of courses required a large amount of bibliographical work which could be done only by an experienced librarian. At the request of the Library School Miss Ngarita Gordon, Assistant Librarian, University of Otago Library, was given a year's leave of absence to act as Bibliographer during the first year of the school. Miss Joan Coutts served as Administrative Assistant in the school and Mrs Lynette Corner as Assistant in the course on Classification and Cataloguing.

The co-operation of another group, the students themselves, has been so intelligent and so enthusiastic that lec-

turers without exception have expressed their enjoyment in working with them.

When the students had been together only a week they formed a class organisation, elected officers and offered to help the school in any way they could. They have developed among themselves a delightful spirit of comradeship and co-operation and they are realising that they as well as the faculty are pioneers in building the Library School. They have served on joint faculty-student committees, and have organised their own committees to carry a number of responsibilities such as evening custodial service at the school. They have published their own review, *Colophon*, which reflects their literary and professional interests.

In addition to the day to day work each student has done a good deal of oral reviewing and reporting in class, has planned and made scale drawings for a library building, has presented two seminar reports and prepared an original bibliography.

Two of the students, dividing subject fields between them have written bibliographical essays on out-of-print New Zealand books that should be reprinted. Six students, working as a committee drew up (with advice from the faculty) a code for listing New Zealand publications that appeared between the period covered by Hocken's *Bibliography of the literature relating to New Zealand* and the beginning of the list of copyright publications issued by the General Assembly Library. Then each of these six students made, according to this code, a bibliography of one year's publications. One other student worked on Otago provincial papers, another prepared a list of choral music supplementing the list appeared in McColvin's *Music Libraries*, 1938. Another student compiled a list on arts and crafts which may be useful to adult education groups.

A few of the students are allowing the tables to be turned upon them and are themselves doing some teaching at the Library School in the fields of their university specialisation. One will present to his fellow students the bibliography of philosophy and others will deal with books on religion, on art, on language, on botany and on zoology.

The aim of the school has been to have the students know books and understand the best administrative policies and technical procedures so far as the profession has developed them. Above all the aim is to have the students go out from the School as intelligent workers who will do nothing without knowing why they do it and will be capable, according

to the needs of the positions they take, of doing good team work or good independent work.

The school is housed in a building adjoining the National Library Service. On the ground floor there is a classroom and next it a typewriter room with six new machines available to the students. A reference room is shared by the National Library Service staff and the Library School students. Upstairs there are faculty offices and study rooms where each student has a separate desk specially designed to hold books, catalogue cards and vertical file folders. Each quarter inch had to be considered in designing these desks because of the limited space available. The National Library Service already seriously overcrowded in its own work has been generous to the Library School but until larger quarters become available to both, thirty will be the maximum number of students who can be accommodated at any one time.

Although the need still exists for bringing new people into the field to increase the number of professional librarians in the Dominion, it will be possible in 1947, and increasingly so as time goes on, for the School to reserve some places for librarians who wish to come on leave of absence for a year's course.

The matter of an additional curriculum combining the General Training Course of the New Zealand Library Association with some work in residence at the Library School is receiving careful consideration. Such a course presupposes very detailed planning to avoid needless repetition and yet to include the parts of the professional course in which group work and group discussion are of special value. Development of such a course must wait until the Staff of the School can be enlarged, and working space can be provided for a greater number of students.

The need is recognised also for short refresher courses for librarians of small libraries, for assistants in large libraries, for school librarians, and for librarians of departmental libraries. The same limitations of staff and space make it necessary to defer most of these short courses, but one will be given January 13-31, 1947, for librarians of small public libraries.

The 1947 professional course will begin on February 10 and close on November 29.